

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Union Education Minister Lays Foundation Stone for ₹479.92 Crore Infrastructure Project at CUO

Landmark MoU Signed Among Six Centrally Funded Higher Education Institutions in Odisha

Union Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan laid the foundation stone for a transformative ₹479.92 crore infrastructure project on 05 July 2025 at the Central University of Odisha (CUO), Sunabeda—located in one of the most tribal-dominated and aspirational districts of eastern India. The project marks a major step towards building a Net Zero Campus that is environmentally sustainable, technologically advanced, and socially inclusive.

The project includes multi-storey academic blocks, ten modern hostel buildings, a grand auditorium, a gymnasium and indoor sports complex, student and shopping centres, a fully equipped health centre, and an international guest house. Designed with green building standards, renewable energy systems, and climate-resilient infrastructure, the Net Zero Campus will significantly reduce the university's carbon footprint while enhancing quality of life for students and faculty.

The Minister also inaugurated several newly completed facilities of the University, including the Academic Building, Health Centre, Vice-Chancellor's Residence, Officers' Quarters, and Staff Quarters.

This landmark investment by the Government of India is a major step toward bridging regional disparities in higher education. It reflects a strong commitment to inclusive growth, tribal empowerment, and regional development through academic excellence and institutional capacity building in the heart of the Eastern Ghats.

Landmark MoU Signed Among Six Centrally Funded Higher Education Institutions in Odisha

A historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed today on 05 July 2025 at CUO, Koraput among six leading centrally funded higher education institutions in Odisha—Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput; Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhubaneswar; National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela; Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Sambalpur; Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Berhampur; and Shri Sadashiva Campus of the Central Sanskrit University, Puri.

This collaborative agreement marks a significant step forward in realizing the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, with a focus on fostering multidisciplinary education, promoting research and innovation, and strengthening community engagement. The institutions have agreed to jointly undertake academic and faculty exchange programmes, enable credit transfer

mechanisms under the Academic Bank of Credits, design joint degree and certificate courses, and initiate collaborative research on themes of regional and national importance.

A key highlight of this partnership is its commitment to inclusive development—especially tribal empowerment, digital and sustainable education, support for entrepreneurship, and the promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems and classical languages. The institutions will also share resources such as laboratories, libraries, and research infrastructure.

To ensure effective coordination and sustained outcomes, a Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) will be constituted, comprising representatives from each partner institution. The JCC will oversee the implementation, set priorities, and facilitate the formation of thematic working groups.

This MoU signifies a unified and strategic approach to strengthening Odisha's higher education ecosystem and contributing to India's broader goals in education, equity, and innovation.

On this occasion the Hon'ble Union Minister of Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan addressed a mass gathering in the University Campus consisting of the University community and the students, teachers and staff of various schools and colleges of adjacent areas inside the district. Also present on the dais were Shri Saptagiri Shankar Ulaka, Member of Parliament, Koraput; Shri Balabhadra Majhi, Member of Parliament, Nabarangpur; Shri Nityananda Gond, Minister SSEPD, ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare, School & Mass Education, Govt. of Odisha, Shri Suryavanshi Suraj, Minister of State, Odia Language, Higher Education & Sports, Govt. of Odisha, Shri Gokulananda Mallik, Minister of State for Fisheries & Animal Resources Development & MSME, Govt. of Odisha, Hon'ble MLAs from undivided Koraput District, including Shri Rama Chandra Kadam, Shri Raghuram Machha, Shri Tara Prasad Bahinipati, Shri Pabitra Saunta, Shri Rupu Bhatra, Shri Gouri Shankar Majhi, Shri Manohar Randhari, Shri Narasing Bhatra and Shri Narasinga Madkani; Dr. Vinit Joshi, IAS, Secretary, Higher Education, Govt. of India and Chairman, UGC, Sh. S.K. Barnwal, IAS, Additional Secretary, MoE, Govt. of India and Shri Subrat Pradhan, Director, Higher Education, Govt. of India; Prof. N. C. Panda, Vice Chancellor I/c, Central University of Odisha, Prof. Shripad Karmalkar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar, Prof. K. Umamaheswar Rao, Director, NIT Rourkela, Prof. Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, IIM Sambalpur, Prof. Prosenjit Mondal, Dean of Academic Affairs, IISER Berhampur and Prof. Shrinivasa Varakhedi, Vice Chancellor, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi

The Vice Chancellor of Central University of Odisha Prof. N.C. Panda delivered the welcome address. Speaking on the occasion the Hon'ble Minister said that Koraput will be the focus district for the Vikshit Odisha 2036, and the Central University of Odisha will be the hub of education in Eastern Region of India. He also announced the starting of Engineering departments from the coming session. Other members of the dais shared the same thoughts and urged for the development of education through the University. Dr. Nirjharini Tripathy proposed the vote of thanks and Ms. Sobhana Mishra anchored the whole event.

Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer